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ART. VI. — *History of New England*. By JOHN G. PALFREY.
Volume II. Boston: Little, Brown, & Co. 1860. 8vo.
pp. xx. and 640.

WE had hardly hoped to be recalled thus early to a duty so grateful to our own feelings as that now before us. Dr. Palfrey's first volume is still a new book, and we learn that, when that made its appearance, the second was not even begun. Of course a part of its materials had been brought together, and so clear-sighted an historian must have taken a comprehensive survey of the entire ground before him. But the labor of consulting authorities, verifying names, dates, and details, and harmonizing apparent discrepancies, as well as the task of elaborate literary composition, has been accomplished in little more than a year and a half. No one who knows the author will imagine that this has been hasty, because rapid work. On the other hand, the volume bears all the tokens of thorough research and careful execution. Like its predecessor, it abounds in references to and quotations from first-hand authorities, and in notes which relieve the text from whatever might break its rhetorical continuity, and which often follow out in detail collateral subjects of inquiry and discussion. Indeed, the text contains what the cursory reader would wish to find there, and little more; while the notes are a mine of ample and varied wealth for the historical student. We need not repeat what we said, on the appearance of the first volume,* as to Dr. Palfrey's conscientious fidelity, his impartiality as an historian, and the uniform adaptation and adequacy of his style to the subject in hand. Whatever approving criticism we then put on record requires now no modification, unless it be a higher coloring, inasmuch as the more numerous threads of narrative have needed more delicate handling to interweave them without dropping or hiding any one of them. It is no small praise that they are all kept in distinct view, while they are so blended as to give perfect unity to the narrative, making it the veritable history of New England, and not

* North American Review for April, 1858.

what we should have had from a less skilful hand, the histories of the separate Colonies, held together only by the binder's thread and the covers.

The previous volume closed with the epoch of the confederation of the four Colonies of Plymouth, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New Haven. The first chapter is a sketch of the institutions and customs, the domestic, social, political, and religious life, and the industrial, educational, and financial condition of the colonies at that epoch. It will bear favorable comparison, as to its range of topics and its vivid presentation of an unfamiliar age to the inward eye, with the similar chapter of Macaulay, which must be fresh in the recollection of all our readers. It exhibits such contrasts as find place in no other history;—on the one hand, the highest civilization of the age, so far as it would be exhibited in intelligence, character, institutions, and provisions for a more ample and prosperous future; on the other, an enforced simplicity, more nearly allied to savage than to civilized life, as to very many external habits and arrangements. The development of the Colonies, and the growth of New England since the era of independence, while they have replaced the rudeness of the seventeenth century by a high grade of exterior culture and refinement, have done little more than to give a fit embodiment to the ideas of our fathers, and to cherish the germs of future states which they beheld in prophetic faith as clearly as we discern them in their realized maturity.

Among the figments which have found extensive currency, not only among the Transatlantic revilers of the Puritans, but among their unfilial posterity, have been the Blue Laws of the New Haven Colony,—a congeries of pious absurdity of which it was utterly impossible to conceive as having been enacted by men who had discretion enough to keep out of fire and water, much less, to found and govern an infant commonwealth. We are glad to find this libellous compilation traced to the mendacity of a man whose only title to fame was that of the most egregious liar of his times, and of whose entire career moral insanity and the total absence of moral principle are the alternative solutions. We quote the foot-note in which Dr. Palfrey puts this subject at rest.

“Most American readers have heard of the ‘Blue Laws’ of New Haven, which have been precisely described as making ‘one thin volume in folio,’ embracing the following among other provisions: ‘No one shall travel, cook victuals, make beds, sweep house, cut hair, or shave, on the Sabbath-day. No woman shall kiss her child on the Sabbath or Fasting day. No one shall read Common Prayer, keep Christmas or Saint days, make minced pies, dance, play cards, or play on any instrument of music, except the drum, trumpet, and jewsharp. Every male shall have his hair cut round, according to a cap.’ (General History of Connecticut, 65, 66, 68, 69, 82.) It is not perhaps so well known, that these statements are without historical foundation. In the primitive age of the Colony, the discretionary action of the Magistrates sometimes resembled the discipline of the head of a family, rather than a formal legal administration; but the existence, at any time, of a code containing provisions such as are quoted above, is a mere fabrication, nor is there any record of so much as single judgments pronounced agreeably to the tenor of those provisions. The anonymous work which first vented the fiction was published in London in 1781, and a second edition appeared in the following year. The author was Samuel Peters, a loyalist and refugee. He was a college contemporary of Trumbull, the conscientiously exact historian of Connecticut, and is said to have been a native of the same town. Trumbull said of him, that ‘of all men with whom he had ever been acquainted, Dr. Peters he had thought, from his first knowledge of him, the least to be depended on as to any matter of fact.’ (Kingsley’s Historical Discourse, p. 84.) The reader at all acquainted with Connecticut history may satisfy himself concerning Peters’s credibility by five minutes’ inspection of his work. The reader without such acquaintance will form some judgment of the author’s capacity for telling the truth, when he comes upon the following representation of a scene on the river Connecticut: ‘Here water is consolidated without frost, by pressure, by swiftness, between the pinching, sturdy rocks, to such a degree of induration, that no iron crow can be forced into it; here iron, lead, and cork have one common weight.’ (General History, &c., p. 127.) Malte-Brun (*Géographie Universelle*, Liv. XIII.) expresses the judicious opinion that this must be ‘grossly exaggerated.’” — p. 32.

In point of fact, the legislation of New England in its early days was in many respects in advance of that of the mother country. Capital offences were fewer; penalties less barbarous; and the laws of property more nearly conformed to the dictates of natural right. In this last particular, England is

still burdened by numerous outgrowths of the feudal system, which statutes and legal evasion have pruned away in part, but which still at times interpose impassable barriers between law and equity. It is truly surprising that the fathers of New England should have kept their codes so entirely free from this hereditary element of British jurisprudence, which in more recent times has found its way into the decisions of our courts and the declarative law of the land. As regards the Judaizing tendency of our early legislation, exaggerated notions have prevailed. The law of Moses was justly revered as of Divine enactment and authority, and its general principles and pervading spirit were worthily regarded as indicating the will of God for all times and nations; but it was never imagined that its particular provisions were binding on any people except that for whose benefit it was promulgated. The discrimination between moral precept and local statute was as distinctly made two centuries ago as it is by our living theologians. In the New Haven Colony, it was ordered, wisely and wholesomely as we think, that "the judicial laws of God, as they were delivered by Moses, and as they are a fence to the moral law, *being neither typical nor ceremonial, nor having any reference to Canaan*, shall be accounted of moral equity, and shall generally bind all offenders, and be a rule to all the courts in this jurisdiction in their proceedings against offenders, till they shall be branched out into particulars hereafter." This, it is believed, was the nearest approach ever made in New England to the re-enactment of the Levitical code, and is the sole foundation of the myth, according to which the founders of New Haven are said to have ordained that the laws of Moses should be in force till they could make better.

The second chapter is a *résumé* of English history from the battle of Marston Moor to the death of Charles I., comprising the development of the Independent church polity, in conflict with the Presbyterian. Of this polity Dr. Palfrey justly regards New England as the strong-hold and the nursery, and he traces its growth and ultimate ascendancy in great measure to reflex influence from the Colonies. It is an undoubted fact, that a large proportion of its advocates in England were intimately connected with Plymouth and Massachusetts, and that

writings which had their origin here were extensively and effectively circulated in the mother country. John Cotton, whose name was still fragrant in his birth-land, was the author of a treatise, entitled, “The True Constitution of a Particular Visible Church, proved by Scripture,” which was published in London in the second year of the Long Parliament. This maintains the entire independencē of each Christian congregation, and concedes to churches no right toward one another, except that of advice or admonition, and of withdrawing from the fellowship of a church that refuses to be counselled or admonished. Cotton was also in intimate correspondence with Thomas Goodwin, a leading member of the Independent party in the Westminster Assembly. Sir Henry Vane, who was a zealous champion of Independency, had no doubt learned its lessons and imbibed its spirit during his official residence in Massachusetts. Then, too, many distinguished citizens of the Colonies visited England as public agents, or for their private purposes; and during the abeyance of monarchy such persons were treated with marked respect, and brought into frequent conference with men in place and power. When we add to all these influences the yet more potent efficacy of successful experiment,—the known and admitted fact that, under a jealously guarded independency, the religious institutions of the New World had become firmly established, and enjoyed even a premature prosperity as compared with all other interests of the colonists,—it is not surprising that the principle of autonomy for each congregation of worshippers should have gained rapidly upon Presbyterianism, which, in truth, was rather imposed by the force of circumstances upon the revolutionary party, than adopted by their free choice as congenial with their political or religious biases. Though the Independents were scantily represented in the Westminster Assembly, their growing ascendancy in Parliament and in the nation at large frustrated, in a great degree, the execution of the ordinances of the Assembly for the settling of the Presbyterian government in the Church of England; and almost the only vestiges of that body which survived its protracted sessions were its Confession of Faith and its Catechisms,—“works

which have exercised a vast influence on religious opinion among the later generations of the British race."

The Commissioners of the Confederacy of New England held their first conference at Boston, in September, 1643. Each of the four Colonies was represented by two deputies, and John Winthrop was chosen as the presiding officer. The hostile designs of the Narragansetts were among the earliest subjects of their deliberations. The Narragansett sachem, Miantonomo, had formed a dangerous connection with Samuel Gorton and his associates in the Providence Plantation. The orderly inhabitants of the plantation cast themselves for protection upon the authorities of Massachusetts Bay. Gorton — whether a hypocrite or a fanatic — was a man who could not be safely tolerated in a feeble community surrounded by savages, who might at any moment be aroused to acts of violence. He seems to have cherished a virulent hatred against every agent, title, and token of authority in church and state, and though in a more settled condition of society his foul scoffs and insults against ministers and magistrates might have been fittingly regarded as demanding no other discipline than that of a mad-house, there were not wanting then inflammable materials which they might kindle into a fierce conflagration. The General Court of Massachusetts issued a warrant to Gorton and his associates to appear at its next meeting. Their answer was an amazing tissue of mysticism, nonsense, abuse, and blasphemy. In accordance with the advice of the Commissioners of the Confederacy, an armed force of forty men was sent to arrest them, and, after a siege of several days, they surrendered, and were conveyed to Boston. The question now was, under what charge they should be arraigned. Their transactions with the Narragansetts alone might have been a sufficient ground for their trial and punishment; but proceedings on this account might tend to create a general alarm and panic. They were, therefore, arraigned as "blasphemous enemies to the true religion of our Lord Jesus Christ and all his holy ordinances, and also to all civil authority among the people of God, and particularly in this jurisdiction." Under these heads of indictment there was no lack of evidence, their own acknowledged writings furnishing the most ample proof.

Gorton was found guilty, and was sentenced, during the pleasure of the Court, "to be confined to Charlestown, there to be set on work, and to wear such bolts and bars as might hinder his escape," and, on penalty of death, to forbear from publishing "any of the blasphemous or abominable heresies where-with he hath been charged." Six of his associates were similarly confined in as many different towns. They were released after four or five months. Their subsequent conduct proved that they had been treated more leniently than they deserved.

On no subject have the colonists of New England received more niggardly justice at the hands of posterity than on their relations with the aborigines. They were manifestly solicitous to deal justly and live peaceably with their savage neighbors. Their hostile movements were never wanton or gratuitous, but always in consequence of danger, real or apprehended. Their very aggressions were uniformly defensive in motive and purpose. In 1642, when the rumors of an impending assault from the Narragansetts were rife, yet not fully authenticated, the General Court of Massachusetts delayed action; for, they argued, "if we should kill any of them, or lose any of our own, and it should be found after to have been a false report, we might provoke God's displeasure, and blemish our wisdom and integrity before the heathen." It was added, "that such as were to be sent out on such an expedition were for the most part godly, and would be as well assured of the justice of the war as the warrant of their call, and then we should not fear their forwardness and courage; but if they should be sent out not well resolved, we might fear the success."

The repeated and sanguinary Indian wars of our fathers have often been contrasted with the pacific terms on which the French on this continent, from the very first, lived with the aboriginal inhabitants, and with the seventy years of perfect quietness enjoyed by the Pennsylvania colonists. Undoubtedly the reasons of this difference were, in great part, theological. Something like religious assimilation was desired and attempted, in each case, as the pledge of peace and the bond of union. In the case of the French, this was very easily effected. Compliance with Romish ceremonies was by no means uncongenial to the Indian character. The savages saw

in the ritual of the Church only an imposing form of idolatry, to which the superior knowledge and civilization of the white men gave an irresistible prestige, and to which they could conform without parting with any of their superstitions, or laying aside any of their ancestral customs. At the same time the ritual, once embraced, multiplied points of contact and community, and established amicable relations under a sanction none the less profoundly felt, because utterly uncomprehended and incomprehensible, on the side of the Indians. The Quakers, with their vague, fluent, and flexible religious creed, occupied a similar vantage-ground. They recognized a mutual community among all expressions of religious sentiment, and in the Great Spirit of the savages they discerned a dim and partial, yet a genuine, acknowledgment of the Deity, whose immediate inspiration was to them above Scripture, and in place of ordinance and ceremony. Their covenants with the Indians could thus have, and on all solemn occasions had, though without the formality of an oath, a religious sanction equally sacred and binding in the minds of both parties. Very different was the case with the founders of New England. Their fixed religious faith and sharply defined Calvinism could find no common or mutual ground with idolaters. They yearned with a true Christian zeal for the conversion of the savage tribes around them; but theirs was a system which admitted of no compromise or half-way conformity, while it was too metaphysical and recondite for the dwarfed and brutalized intellects of the aborigines. Except in a few instances, — of blessed significance, we doubt not, to the individual converts, but wholly insignificant as regarded the tribes at large, — the religious dissiliency remained irreconcilable, a perpetual ground of distrust, suspicion, and fear on the one side, and of ill-suppressed rancor or open hostility on the other.

But the New England Puritans looked upon their wilderness home as the destined theatre of an exalted Christian heroism; and, high above temporal safety and prosperity, their leading aim was to do battle with the Arch-enemy of souls, and to win a new realm for Christ. We have in the surviving literature of the times distinct vestiges of two widely different horoscopes for the future of New England, the one glowing

and blazing with the gorgeous imagery of the Apocalypse, the other red with the blood of martyred saints, but both equally presenting the strongest incentives to spiritual energy and prowess. There lies now before us a correspondence in 1634, between Dr. Twiss (afterward Prolocutor of the Westminster Assembly), and Joseph Mede, the first Biblical scholar of his age. Dr. Twiss writes: "Considering our English Plantations of late, and the opinion of many grave Divines concerning the Gospel's fleeting Westward; sometimes I have had such thoughts, Why may not that be the place of New Jerusalem?" Mede's answer is worthy of note, as indicating the shade of opinion which seems to have been the more prevalent on our own side of the ocean. The following is an extract from his letter:—

"Though there be but little hope of the general Conversion of those Natives in any considerable part of that Continent; yet I suppose it may be a work pleasing to Almighty God and our Blessed Saviour, to affront the Devil with the sound of the Gospel and Cross of Christ in those places where he had thought to have reigned securely and out of the dinne thereof; and though we make no Christians there, yet to bring some thither to disturb and vex him, where he reigned without check.

"For that I may reveal my conceit further, though perhaps I cannot prove it, yet I think thus;

"That those Countries were first inhabited since our Saviour and his Apostles times, and not before; yea, perhaps, some ages after: there being no signs or footsteps found among them, or any Monuments of older habitation, as there is with us.

"That the Devil, being impatient of the sound of the Gospel and Cross of Christ in every part of this old world, so that he could in no place be quiet for it, and foreseeing that he was like at length to lose all here, bethought himself to provide him of a seed over which he might reign securely; and in a place, *ubi nec Pelopidarum facta neque nomen audiret*.

"That accordingly he drew a Colony out of some of those barbarous Nations dwelling upon the Northern Ocean, (whither the sound of Christ had not yet come,) and promising them by some Oracle to shew them a Country far better than their own, (which he might soon do,) pleasant, large, where never man yet inhabited, he conducted them over those desert Lands and Islands (which are many in that Sea) by the

way of the North into America; which none would ever have gone, had they not first been assured there was a passage that way into a more desirable Country. Namely, as when the world apostatized from the Worship of the true God, God called Abram out of Chaldee into the Land of Canaan, of him to raise him a Seed to preserve a light unto his Name: So the Devil, when he saw the world apostatizing from him, laid the foundations of a new Kingdom, by deducting this Colony from the North into America, where since they have increased into an innumerable multitude. And where did the Devil ever reign more absolutely and without controll, since mankind fell first under his clutches?

"But see the hand of Divine Providence. When the off-spring of these Runnagates from the sound of Christ's Gospel had now replenisht that other world, and began to flourish in those two Kingdoms of Peru and Mexico, Christ our Lord sends his Mastives the Spaniards to hunt them out and worry them: Which they did in so hideous a manner, as the like thereunto scarce ever was done since the Sons of Noah came out of the Ark. What an affront to the Devil was this, where he had thought to have reigned securely, and been forever concealed from the knowledge of the followers of Christ?

"Yet the Devil perhaps is less grieved for the loss of his servants by the destroying of them, than he would be to lose them by the saving of them; by which latter way I doubt the Spaniards have despoiled him but of a few. What then if Christ our Lord will give him his second affront with better Christians, which may be more grievous to him than the former?" — *Mede's Works*, p. 800.

This "affront" was sedulously offered to the Prince of Darkness by the antagonistic forces of New England Puritanism. As early as 1622 Bradford relates, with deep concern, the death of Squanto, the faithful interpreter and guide of the Plymouth colonists, who breathed his last, "desiring y^e Gov^r to pray for him, that he might goe to y^e Englishmens God in heaven," — a statement which sufficiently proves that, in the midst of privations and straitnesses such as civilized man has seldom encountered, these loyal Christians had not forgotten their Master's parting charge. Similar narratives are to be found in the primitive records of the other Colonies. The General Court of Massachusetts was "the first Missionary Society in the history of Protestant Christendom," that body having, in 1646, not only provided for the sending of suitable religious

teachers to the Indians, but also voted a pecuniary appropriation in aid of the work. A week before the passage of this order, John Eliot commenced his apostolate. There can be no doubt that his success was for a season adequate to his most sanguine expectations; and the reason why the benefits conferred through his ministry were of so brief duration is equally evident. While individual minds were profoundly impressed and individual characters thoroughly Christianized under his influence, his converts were not sufficiently enlightened to become themselves teachers or missionaries. The work depended mainly on his pre-eminent qualifications for it,—his surpassing zeal, his unwearied beneficence, his superior philological capacity, and his rare administrative tact. Others possessed some of these gifts; but the absence of either of them was a fatal defect. There exists no soul so degraded or imbruted that it may not be made the recipient of Christian discipleship; but uncivilized man can be thus wrought upon only by the immediate personal agency of a strong mind and a fervent heart. Christianity can be preserved, propagated, and transmitted in none but a civilized community. The most sincere and steadfast of the Indian converts were in no proper sense of the word civilized. The arts and refinements which Eliot sought to establish among them were uncongenial to them,—restraints rather than privileges. It may be questioned whether his translation of the Bible was of any service to them. It is more than doubtful whether his version was in itself clearly intelligible; for in the absence of lexicons, and in the exceeding poverty of the native tongue, the words that he was compelled to employ must have been often unsuited to the material objects which they designated, and still oftener inadequate to the spiritual ideas they were intended to convey. And, were this otherwise, we can hardly imagine that the subjects of his ministry could have acquired the art of reading with sufficient facility to profit by his labors. No wonder, then, that the settlements of Christian Indians were early scattered, and the traces of his noble philanthropy dissipated.

In other parts of New England, and by other similarly earnest laborers, numerous aggressions were made upon the ignorance and idolatry of the natives. Through the agency of

Winslow, then in England, the Society for Propagating the Gospel was formed and incorporated in 1649. This Society — at first composed of Puritans — sustained for more than a century various missionary operations among the Indians, though after its re-incorporation under Charles II. a large proportion of its funds was diverted to the establishment and maintenance of Episcopal churches in the Colonies.

Prominent among Dr. Palfrey's characteristics as an historian is his sympathetic appreciation of the leading men in the administration of church and state. Here he pursues the safe middle path between the indiscriminate panegyric of characters which were not exempt from the common weaknesses of humanity and the besetting faults of their times, and the indiscriminate denunciation of narrowness where the Divine Providence had not yet opened larger views, and bigotry which the best light of the age was not adequate to dispel. He judges the fathers of New England, not by the ideal standard of perfect excellence, but by the measure of their culture and opportunities, — of what would then have been an enlightened conscience, — in fine, by the proper stature and proportions of a true Christian man of the seventeenth century. We extract, as an admirable specimen of sincere and genial, yet tempered and balanced eulogy, a part of his sketch of John Winthrop's character.

"They who, to make up their idea of consummate excellence in a statesman, require the presence of a religious sense prompting and controlling all public conduct, will recognize with admiration the prominence of that attribute in the character of this brave, wise, unselfish, and righteous ruler. His sense of religious obligation was the spirit of his politics, as well as the spirit of his daily life. It had pleased God to place him where he might so act, as that the virtue and well-being of large numbers of men, living and to be born, might be the fruit of his courage, diligence, steadiness, and foresight. With clear intelligence he discerned the responsibilities of that position, and accepted them with a cordiality which made it easy to subordinate every less worthy object, and control every meaner motive that might interfere with the generous task he had assumed.

"To the public service he lavishly gave his fortune. As freely he devoted to it the best labor of his mind, and sacrificed every personal

ambition. No obstinacy, or petulance, or pride, hindered the upright application of his serene and solid judgment. Not only did he not suffer injustice to irritate him; he would not be disabled, nor discouraged, nor depressed by it. Immovably patient of opposition, he scanned its reasons in reconsideration of his own plans, or watched its course to learn how it could be conciliated, or to note the time when its relaxation, or its errors, should invite a repetition of the efforts which it had embarrassed. He was too right-minded and too kind-hearted to despise any man's good-will or good opinion; but he sought public favor by no arts but honest labors for the public welfare. And he was far above regarding public favor as the price that was to stimulate or to requite those labors. When, from time to time, the place of highest dignity was assigned to others, he addressed himself, with no sense of mortification, and with unabated zeal, to the tasks of humbler station. He knew how with dignity to meet injustice and slights, as well as how to hold power and receive applause with soberness and modesty. Vindictiveness was an emotion unknown to him; resentments had no resting-place in his bosom. He judged candidly; he forgave without an effort; he loved to win back the offended by graceful overtures and prompt amends; and personal discontents could not withdraw him from alliances which would help him to promote the general good. So gentle was his nature, that no bitterness mingled with, or was excited by, the severest exercise of his official authority; men who had suffered severely from his action as a magistrate — Coddington, Wheelwright, Williams, Vane, Clarke — were afterwards in friendly correspondence with him. In private relations and intercourse, the qualities that specifically denote the gentleman were eminently his. His genuine sense of honor suspected no intention of offence. Just, frank, cordial, and ready to every expression of respect and courtesy, he gave to all their due, whether in great or in little things. Gracious and humane, he never, by the rudeness of self-assertion, gave pain to an inferior. A tender husband and father, his public cares never made him forgetful of the obligation of the domestic ties. What remains of his private correspondence is an affecting record of that union of excellences which attracts love as much as it commands veneration.

“His ability ought to be estimated by the amount and the quality of what it projected and what it achieved. His scheme of public action had been so well considered, that no complication of affairs found him unprepared with the principles which were to solve it; and, in the quaint phraseology of his age and sect, he was used to express, as occasion prompted, the profoundest doctrines of social science. His comprehensive system of politics embraced a long range of the future.

Not magnificence, nor inordinate power, was what he desired for the community which he was establishing ; but freedom, security, competency, virtue, and content. The founders of dynasties have hitherto commanded the world's most noisy plaudits. But the time will come, when the men who have created happy republics will be thought worthy of higher praise.

"The defective part of his intellectual character, as it presents itself to the view of a later age, was his easiness of belief. Yet simply to tax him with credulity is to express no weighty censure ; for what man may pretend that his reasons precisely fix the measure of his faith ? To say that stories of monstrous marvels, to which so singular a condition of life gave rise, found in him an interested listener, or that successes or calamities were unreasonably construed by him as judicial rewards or penalties, is to say no more than that, in this respect, his habits of thought were the same as those of the wisest of his contemporaries, and did not anticipate the more cautious philosophy of later times. If the fact that he did not read the Bible with uniform good judgment is to be made the foundation of any correct inference, it must be coupled with the fact that he belonged to the second generation that came forward after the reform from Popery had placed the open Bible in the people's hands. Born and receiving his early education in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, he passed his life in an age when the science of Biblical interpretation was not far advanced beyond its rudiments." — pp. 266 — 269.

One of the most striking features of the early history of Massachusetts is the instinct of self-government and of virtual independence. The transfer of the Company's Charter to its own soil was the initial act, to which the entire course of colonial administration and legislation was ever afterward conformed. The spirit of the Revolution — recent in some of the provinces — had been maturing there for a century and a half, when it took shape and action at Lexington. Except when under temporary duress, — never recognized as normal, nor endured without vigorous protest, — Massachusetts was continually exercising acts of sovereignty. When her franchises were respected, her magistrates demeaned themselves as a derived and loyal, but never as a subject and crippled government ; seeking redress of grievances, but never suing for court favor, or accepting as a boon aught that she could claim as a right. Even under the Puritan Parliament, and under

the Protector whom she deemed the representative man of her religious theories, she held herself aloof from acts of submission as sedulously as under the dreaded rule of the Stuart dynasty. When Cromwell proposed to Massachusetts to help him conquer New Netherland, she treated his demand as subject to her consent or refusal. The General Court expressed themselves as "ready at all times, wherein they might with safety to the liberty of their consciences, public peace, and welfare, to their utmost to attend his Highness's pleasure," and "freely consented and gave liberty to his Highness's commissioners" to enroll five hundred volunteers. When it was intimated that it was the pleasure of Parliament that they should take a new patent from that body, after a year's deliberation, they represented their right, by charter, "to live under the government of a Governor and Magistrates of their own choosing, and under laws of their own making." About this time, Massachusetts ventured upon an undeniable act of sovereignty, — the coining of money. The need of this was by no means evident, though the introduction of much counterfeit coin was alleged as one of the grounds of the proceeding; and Spanish coin, in itself not inconvenient for current use, was a chief material for the operations of the colonial mint. Shilling, sixpenny, and threepenny pieces were issued; and the coinage was continued for more than thirty years. Considering the time when the exercise of this right was assumed, — a period when the principles of political freedom were professed, though atrociously violated, by the dominant party in the mother country, and when his relations with European powers occupied the chief attention of the Protector, — we cannot but believe that the establishment of the mint in Boston was designed as a precedent of self-government and an assertion of partial and modified independence. *Partial and modified independence*, we say; for we suppose that, from the very infancy of the Colony, its amenableness to the legislation of the national Parliament was called in question, while there was not wanting a sentiment of loyalty to the crown, still less, of allegiance to the home executive while the throne was vacant.

At the restoration of the British monarchy, the confederated

Colonies had reason for self-congratulation on the prudence which had governed their relations to the Protectorate. They had proclaimed neither of the Protectors, but had simply recognized their sovereignty as an existing fact. On the accession of Charles II., complaints were made to him by the Quakers of the treatment their sect had received in Massachusetts, as also a representation of alleged wrongs and grievances by other parties. The General Court voted a loyal address to the King, in which they sought to purge themselves of the charges that had been urged against them, and prayed for the continuance of their liberties, religious and civil, "according to the grantees' known end of suing for the patent conferred upon the plantation" in the last preceding reign. As regards the Quakers, toward whom they had exercised no little severity, they urged their necessity as their apology. Nor were they without reasonable justification on this ground. Indeed, had they only made a nicer discrimination between religious malpractices and breaches of the peace, they might have inflicted under the latter head hardly less heavy penalties than they imposed under the former. We cannot find on record an instance in which the mere profession of Quaker opinions was punished; but the victims were such as ran naked through the streets, or disturbed public assemblies by frantic outcries, or gave vent to seditious and defamatory utterances (and such utterances were perilous in those days of weakness), against the existing authorities. But our fathers waged judicial warfare against Quakerism in the concrete, and they therefore stand arraigned before their posterity as bigots and persecutors, though the immunity of Quakers on their soil would have been equivalent to the subversion of all authority, and the utter destruction of social order and tranquillity.

The Restoration was incidentally the source of yet another serious embarrassment to the magistrates of the New England Colonies. In 1660 Whalley and Goffe, two of the members of the High Court of Justice for the trial of Charles I. and signers of the warrant for his execution, arrived in Boston in the same vessel that brought the news of the King's accession. They were warmly welcomed, and for several months they appeared freely in public, and often prayed and *prophesied* at religious

meetings. Cambridge was their place of stated sojourn, and they frequently visited other towns in the vicinity. When authentic intelligence was received of their exclusion from the Act of Indemnity, it was deemed inexpedient to come to an open issue with the home government, and the exiles were helped on their way to a safe retreat, in advance of the warrant at length reluctantly issued for their apprehension. Their story, familiar in its outlines to all our readers, is related in the volume before us with greater fulness of detail than in any other history within our knowledge.

Narrow limits of space and time prevent our giving a more thorough synopsis of the contents of this volume, or following our author through his narrative of the stormy period in the colonial annals which ensued upon the restoration of the Stuart dynasty. We have been able to offer but a very inadequate view of the ground covered by these pages ; but we trust that the necessary meagreness of our notice, which on every other account we regret, may make our readers the more solicitous to trace out, under Dr. Palfrey's guidance, the march of events, on which we have merely indicated a few of the prominent epochs and stages. The work, when completed, will be a classic of its kind, and will meet to the universal satisfaction the want which has long been felt in our literature, of a History of New England, authentic, drawn from original sources, comprehensive, impartial, and in spirit and style worthy of the men and the transactions it commemorates.